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APPROVAL OF UNDP ASSISTANCE TO AN INTERREGIONAL PROJECT

(INT/92/204) - Sustainable Development Network (SDN)

Date of approval by the AC:1/	22 January 1992	
Expected duration:	One year	
Proposed executing agency:	UNDP/OPS	
Government implementing agency:	Various agencies	
Proposed UNDP contribution:	$1 200 000	Source of funds: SPR

Project background

Concern for present and future generations explicitly requires the maintenance of the biophysical resource base upon which development depends. The above-mentioned project (SDN) seeks to facilitate access to information that will allow all countries to progress toward that goal. How each network contributes to that goal on the national scale is a task to be defined by the particular country's citizens and institutions. The SDN has both a macro-perspective on social and economic policies affecting sustainability as well as a sectoral focus on specific natural resource management strategies and appropriate technologies. Sustainability in development requires more than information, it requires fundamental changes in individual and collective values. Signals that the earth is threatened are abundant, but not yet coercive, hence the need for adoption of the values inherent in the sustainable development concept.

The SDN, a network of networks, is a major UNDP action programme for the 1990s. Even more important than the funds provided for Network operations is the commitment of the UNDP Field Offices in over 100 countries to providing technical and institutional support to each national SDN. This support will be particularly significant during the formative period of each national Directorate. Once the Network is operational, UNDP can be expected to be a model for other institutions by becoming one of the Network's best clients, both as a user and supplier of information.

Description of project

The project will enable each country to have a national SDN with a Directorate that fosters information exchange among government agencies, NGOs, the private sector and international development assistance agencies in support of specific sustainable development activities. At the national level project activities will include: (a) seeking out potential users of information, defining their needs and query the national and

1/ This Fact Sheet reflects the status of the project/revision at the time it was approved by the Action Committee; modifications to the project/revision may have occurred subsequently.

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international network for appropriate answers; (b) monitoring government, donor and private sector policies, programmes and projects serving as a communications bridge among them; (c) being alert to useful information: case studies, technologies and policy initiatives, training opportunities, etc., and assuring that information is transmitted to grassroots users; and (d) affording all members direct electronic access to a wide range of information sources as a node in a global SDN.

The SDN will not create a massive data base of its own, but will subscribe to an array of networks that can provide information on specific topics of concern to the national SDNs. The Agenda 21 Information System being developed by the UNCED Secretariat will figure prominently here; and an explicit networking goal will be to foment increased North-South and South-South exchange of information relevant to sustainable development. Other activities will involve: (i) defining the focus on topics of immediate relevance to development programmes in a specific country; (ii) conducting macro-analysis of the impacts of sectoral policies on the sustainability of development; (iii) analyzing the sustainability implications of national budgetary allocations; (iv) assessing the ecological, economic and social sustainability of current rates of population growth; (v) conserving energy and producing non-conventional energy; (vi) establishing natural forest management by small farmers, indigenous groups and the timber industry; (vii) enhancing the sustained productivity of traditional agricultural and grazing agro-ecosystems; (viii) implementing changes in industry, mining and minerals processing practices in order to mitigate downstream and downwind impacts on health, fisheries and agricultural production; (ix) promoting buffer zone economic activities and greater local participation in ecotourism in the vicinity of protected areas; (x) reducing human health and ecological impacts of the use of agrochemicals in commercial agriculture by application of integrated pest management and other technologies; and (xi) improving the quality of life of the poor urban population through activities including water supply, wastewater treatment, and employment generation.

Inputs

UNDP will provide a programme to focus on 20 or more fully functional national SDNs and the central support they will require with emphasis on support and action at the national level based on in-country needs. It will also finance the need for experts and consultants, a subcontract, equipment, and miscellaneous costs.

Financial data

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Personnel	500 000
Subcontract	150 000
Equipment	300 000
Miscellaneous	250 000
Total	1 200 000

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